



# SUNDAY SERMON

## RECAP

8 March 2026

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### Sermon Notes

**Sermon Title:** How to be blessed with rest

Pastor Mark Hodgetts

**Key Scripture:** Matthew 11:28-30 (NKJV)

### Introduction

Repetition is the mother of learning. Paul wrote to the church in Philippi and said, "It's no trouble for me to repeat things to you because it will keep you on track."

The Greek word for rest is Anapausis. Ana means anew, with intensity, to commit to something totally. Pausis means to pause, to stop, to be refreshed. So anapausis is about total rest, recovery and renewal.

In Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus tells us how to do this. He uses the illustration of the yoke that is placed on the neck of a pair of oxen. It sounds like a contradiction, because Jesus is saying that we need to take this instrument of work upon us in order to find true rest.

This rest He offers involves our reaction but not our works. We can't work to gain this rest, but there is something we need to do.

Hebrews 4:1 (ESV)

Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.

The fear referred to here is to be in awe, to have a profound reference for God and His amazing promise of rest.

Hebrews 4:11 (KJV)

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

The labour referred to is a passionate, eager, earnest pursuit.

In Matthew 11:28-30 a number of action words are used. They are the actions we need to take in order to enter into God's rest.



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### 1. Come

Jesus said, "Come to Me."

This involves our relationship with God. It is about forsaking our own way and our own thoughts and choosing to come to Him and follow His ways. It is about giving up our own restless attempts to please God, and recognising that Jesus is Saviour, our only answer.

We come to Jesus when we connect our whole lives to Him and abide in Him.

Jesus said, "Come ye apart and rest awhile." If we don't take time to come ye apart to be with Him we could find ourselves coming apart.

### 2. Cease

"Come to me all you who labour."

Jesus wants to give us rest but we need to cease from our hard labour. He is offering us an internal rest. A rest for our souls.

This is a spiritual and emotional rest, a peace for our souls.

So many people live from a place of fatigue. God wants us to rest where He can give us new strength.

We need to cease from dead religious works and self-effort.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NKJV)

<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

<sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Our minds should enter a place of rest and peace, as we cease from labouring and resist the wild running anxious thoughts from filling our minds.

### 3. Release

Matthew 11:28 "... and are heavy laden"

We need to release any burdens we are carrying, whether they be sin, emotional baggage, cares of the world, pride & Self-sufficiency, or legalistic works and religious rules.



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Release – Casting all your cares on the Lord for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7)

Corrie ten Boom said, “If you look to the world you will be distressed, if you look with your will be depressed, but if you look to Christ you will be at rest.”

Psalm 55:22 (TPT)

King David said, *“So here's what I've learned through it all: Leave all your cares and anxieties at the feet of the Lord, and measureless grace will strengthen you. He will never let the righteous be shaken.”*

Story of the hitchhiker with the heavy backpack. He got a lift in a bakkie but sat in the back with his backpack still on. Sometimes we put our lives in God’s hands but we still keep our backpacks on. The Lord wants us to put our burdens down, to cast them upon Him.

#### 4. Take

Matt 11:29 “... take my yoke upon you.”

Jesus doesn't say, “I am going to place my yoke upon you.” No, He says, “Take my yoke upon you.”

We need to make the decision to take His yoke upon ourselves. This involves trust. We take His yoke by faith because there is a blessing there. The blessing of rest.

Think about what Paul says about the armour of God. God gives us the armour but there are action words for us to do.

Read Ephesians 6:11-17 (NASB)

- Put on
- Take up
- Having belted
- Having put on
- Having strapped on
- Take up
- Take

There are so many believers with the armour of God lying next to them but they don't take it up.

Jesus offers us a rested life. Resting even while we are working.

His rest is not idleness or laziness. It's not about a vacation. It's about a 'vacation' (rest) in your vocation.

If we find Jesus we will find rest.



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Verse 2 of the Hymn “Blessed Assurance” explains this well.

Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
Angels descending bring from above  
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

### 5. Learn

Matt 11:29b (NKJV)

“Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart”

Before we learn from Jesus we need to learn about Jesus. Jesus describes Himself as gentle and lowly in heart.

Meekness is not about weakness, but about controlled might. Jesus is the perfect example of this.

### 6. Receive

Matthew 11:29c (NKJV)

“I will give you rest, and you will find rest for your soul.”

Rest is not a reward it is a gift

Luke 12:31 (NCV)

But seek God’s kingdom, and all your other needs will be met as well.

### 7. Perceive

Matt 11:30 “My yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

The people needed a different perception of what a yoke is. The religious leaders had placed a heavy yoke on them with all kinds of religious rules.

Luke 11:46 (TPT)

Jesus responded, “You are also hypocrites, you experts of the law! You crush people beneath the burden of obeying impossible religious regulations, yet you would never even think of doing them yourselves.

Acts 15:10 (TLB)

And now are you going to correct God by burdening the Gentiles with a yoke that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear?

Gal 5:1 (NIV)

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.



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Jesus said that He would give us a light yoke.

There is a movement where some people want to lead believers back to Jewish roots and all kinds of religious burdens.

Reinhardt Bonnke had this to say: “We are not going back to Jewishness, we are moving forward to Jesusness.”

The yoke Jesus offers us is well-fitting, it does not choke or chafe. It is easy and His burden is light.

Let grace be your lesson, and Jesus be your pulling partner. Our responsibility is to respond to His ability.

Story of Jehoshaphat. Cried out to the Lord for help. Then sent the worshippers into the battle. And God gave them the victory.

Whatever situation we face we can rest in the Lord’s strength, we can praise Him in the battle, and He will fight the battle for us.



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